

THIS OPINION WAS NOT WRITTEN FOR PUBLICATION

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today (1) was not written for publication in a law journal and (2) is not binding precedent of the Board.

Paper No. 22

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte BOB HOOSE
and WILLIAM J. JOHNSON

Appeal No. 1997-1274
Application 08/431,397¹

ON BRIEF

Before HAIRSTON, BARRETT, and FRAHM, Administrative Patent Judges.

BARRETT, Administrative Patent Judge.

¹ Application for patent filed April 28, 1995, entitled "Automatic Invocation Of Object During Data Entry In A Data Processing System User Interface," which is a continuation of Application 08/058,344, filed May 6, 1993.

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DECISION ON REQUEST FOR REHEARING

Appellants request rehearing of our decision entered September 3, 1999.

We have reconsidered our decision in light of Appellants' arguments, but are not persuaded of any errors therein. Therefore, we decline to make any changes in our prior decision.

OPINION

Appellants argue that we overlooked or misapprehended limitation d) of claims 1 and 11 in sustaining the anticipation rejection of claims 1 and 11 over Davis. In particular, Appellants argue that Davis does not teach "determining if said second object is present on said user interface . . .," as provided by limitation d). We stand by our decision.

We interpreted the terms "object" and "location," as applied to claim 1, as follows (Decision, page 4):

In terms of claim 1, a particular field (e.g., "alpha 1," "beta 1," etc.) in a category (e.g., category "Outline/first") is an "object" and the category itself (e.g., category "Outline/first" or "Outline/second") is also an "object." Thus, going from field "alpha 1" to "beta 1" in category "Outline/first" is a move from a first object to a second object. Also, going from field "alpha 1" in category "Outline/first," shown in figure

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5h, to field "alpha 2" in category "Outline/second" in figure 5i is a move from a first object (either field "alpha 1" or category "Outline/first") to a second object (either field "alpha 2" or category "Outline/second"). The "location" in the "object" is the position of the cursor in the Edit window, e.g., the cursor (unnumbered) in Edit Window 264 in figure 5i can be considered a "second location" in a "second object." The Edit Window is associated with the particular field (i.e., object) in a particular category (also an object).

We addressed limitation d) as follows (Decision, pages 9-10):

Nevertheless, we find that Davis discloses limitations d) and e) for the reasons discussed with respect to limitation c). First, hitting the TAB key to move from one field to another is "receiving an input from said user to move said cursor to a next location" as recited in limitation c) and the system brings the next field (the second object) to the user interface and provides the cursor at the second location in the Edit Window. This is basically the same as the admitted prior art except that only one field appears on the screen in Davis at a time. The user may enter data as recited in limitation e). Second, selecting the "next category" from the menu in figure 5h is "receiving an input from said user to move said cursor to a next location" as recited in limitation c) and the system brings the next category (the second object) to the user interface and provides the cursor at the second location as shown in figure 5i. The user may enter data as recited in limitation e)."

The screens shown in figure 5 of Davis are specific examples of the "FORMS" objects in figure 3a. Each category under "FORMS" is an object as indicated by the fact that it has a separate block in figure 3a and each category (object)

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is separately displayed on the user interface; e.g., figure 5g shows the object category "Outline/first" and figure 5i shows the object category "Outline/second." Each "FORMS" category (object) has one or more "field" objects, e.g., Category 1 in figure 3a has "!field 1" and "field 2," where the data field is indicated by rectangles next to the field names. In Davis, a category has all its fields displayed on the user interface, e.g., "Outline/first" in figure 5g has fields "alpha 1," "beta 1," "gamma 1," and "!omega" all on the user interface. Although we believe that one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that if the list of fields (objects) was longer, the system could scroll the field pointer 266 down the list to fields (objects) which are not currently shown on the interface and, thus, bring such fields (objects) to the user interface, just as a user scrolls through a document in a word processing program, such a finding is not part of the rejection. When a FORM is filled out with specific information it becomes one of the RECORDS in figure 3a.

When the TAB key is pressed to go to from a first field (object) to a second field (object) within a category (object), e.g., from field (object) "alpha 1" to field

(object) "beta 1," the system determines that the second field (object) is present on the user interface and data may be entered within the edit window at a second location for the second field (object). The system "determines if said second object is present on said user interface" because it interprets the TAB key as a command to go to the next field (second object) on the user interface in the same way as admitted prior art systems (specification, page 1) interpret the TAB key as a determination that the next field is on the user interface. Claim 1 does not define how the system determines if the object is present on the user interface, so recognition of the TAB key is one method of determining. Claim 1 says nothing about skipping fields (objects) or changing the order of appearance of fields (objects).

When the "next category" is selected from the menu, the system determines that the second category (object) is not present on the user interface and brings the second category (object) to the user interface, e.g., bringing up the user interface for the next category shown in figure 5i.

Appellants argue that hitting the TAB key or selecting the "next category" from the menu is not the same as

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"determining if said second object is present on said user interface . . ." because (Req. for Reh'g, page 2):

Davis has no need to determine if the second object is present on the user interface. This is because the data is always entered into the same window 264. A field pointer 266 determines which field is enabled for data entry (column 12, lines 20-34) in the window 264. There is no need for Davis to determine if the second object (for example, a second field) is present on the user interface because the window is already displayed.

We disagree with these arguments. Davis determines that the next field (object) is present on the user interface in response to pressing a TAB key in the same way as the admitted prior art (specification, page 1) and determines that the next category (object) is not present on the user interface in response to a selection of the "next category" item from the menu. Appellants have not explained, for example, why, when there are multiple fields displayed on the user interface as in Appellants' figure 2, pressing a TAB key in the admitted prior art (specification, page 1) does not involve a determination by the system that the next field is on the user interface and why Davis does not involve this same determination.

The argument that Davis has no need to determine if the second object is present on the user interface because the

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window is already displayed is unpersuasive. The Edit Window 264 is just a wordprocessing window for entering data into the object; it is not the object itself. Instead of a separate line for each field (object) as for fields 0, 1, and 7 in Appellants' figure 2, Davis uses a pointer 266 to indicate the field and a single edit window because the data length may be extensive. Claim 1 does not specify how the objects or locations appear on the user interface and does not define over Davis. The edit window's presence in Davis does not eliminate the need to determine if the second object is present on the user interface. The system in Davis determines that the next object is on the user interface if the TAB key is pressed (i.e., that it is one of the fields for a particular category) and determines that the next object is not on the interface if the "next category" is selected from the menu. The location of the cursor in the edit window for a first object (say "alpha 1") is a first location and the location of the cursor in the edit window for the second object (say "beta 1") is a second location although the cursor may have the same physical location on the screen.

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For the reasons stated above, Appellants have not persuaded us that we erred in our finding of anticipation.

CONCLUSION

We have considered Appellants' request to the extent that we have reconsidered our decision of September 3, 1999, but we decline to make any changes therein.

No time period for taking any subsequent action in connection with this appeal may be extended under 37 CFR § 1.136(a).

DENIED

KENNETH W. HAIRSTON)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	
)	
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)	BOARD OF PATENT
LEE E. BARRETT)	APPEALS
Administrative Patent Judge)	AND
)	INTERFERENCES
)	
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